

Code of Professional Responsibility New Mexico Court Interpreters

Certified court interpreters are highly skilled professionals who fulfill an essential role in the administration of justice and in the protection of the 4th and 6th Amendment rights for non-English speaking persons. In their capacity as officers of the court, court interpreters are bound to a professional code of ethics to ensure due process of law.

- Canon 1 Official court interpreters act strictly in the interests of the court they serve.
- Canon 2 Official court interpreters reflect proper court decorum and act with dignity and respect to the officials and staff of the court.
- Canon 3 Official court interpreters avoid professional or personal conduct which would discredit the court.
- Canon 4 Official court interpreters, except upon court order, shall not disclose any information of a confidential nature about court cases obtained while performing interpreting duties.
- Canon 5 Official court interpreters respect the restraints imposed by the need for confidentiality and secrecy as protected under applicable federal and state law. Interpreters shall disclose to the court, and to the parties in a case, any prior involvement with that case, or private involvement with the parties or others significantly involved in the case.
- Canon 6 Official court interpreters undertake to inform the court of any impediment in the observance of this Code or of any effort by another to cause the Code to be violated.
- Canon 7 Official court interpreters work unobtrusively with full awareness of the nature of the proceedings.
- Canon 8 Official court interpreters fulfill a special duty to interpret accurately and faithfully without indicating any personal bias, avoiding even the appearance of partiality.
- Canon 9 Official court interpreters maintain impartiality by avoiding undue contact with witnesses, attorneys, litigants and their families, and any unauthorized contact with jurors. This should not limit, however, those appropriate contacts necessary to prepare adequately for their assignment.
- Canon 10 Official court interpreters refrain from giving advice of any kind to any party or individual and from expressing personal opinion in a matter before the court.

Canon 11 Official court interpreters perform to the best of their ability to assure due process for the parties, accurately state their professional qualifications, and refuse any assignment for which they are not qualified or under conditions which substantially impair their effectiveness.

They preserve the level of language used, and the ambiguities and nuances of the speaker, without any editing. Implicit in the knowledge of their limitations is the duty to correct any error of interpretation, and demonstrate their professionalism by requesting clarification of ambiguous statements or unfamiliar vocabulary and to analyze objectively any challenge to their performance. Interpreters have the duty to call to the attention of the court any factors or conditions which adversely affect their ability to perform adequately.

Canon 12 Official court interpreters accept no remuneration, gifts, gratuities, or valuable consideration in excess of their authorized compensation in the performance of their official interpreting duties. Additionally, they avoid conflict of interest or even the appearance thereof.

Canon 13 Official court interpreters support other official interpreters by sharing knowledge and expertise with them to the extent practicable in the interests of the court, and by never taking advantage of knowledge obtained in the performance of official duties, or by their access to court records, facilities, or privileges, for their own or another's personal gain.

Canon 14 Official court interpreters of the New Mexico state courts willingly accept and agree to this code, and understand that appropriate sanctions may be imposed by the court for willful violations.

Ethical Standards and Responsibilities

1. The interpreter shall render a complete and accurate interpretation.
2. The interpreter shall remain impartial.
3. The interpreter shall maintain confidentiality.
4. The interpreter shall confine himself or herself to the role of interpreting.
5. The interpreter shall be prepared for any type of proceeding or case.
6. The interpreter shall ensure that the duties of his or her office are carried out under working conditions that are in the best interest of the court.
7. The interpreter shall be familiar with and adhere to all of these ethical standards, and shall maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct to promote public confidence in the administration of justice.

Interpreter's Signature

Interpreter's Name

Date

Address